

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Goodwin and Nelson and Honorable Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Deb Patterson, State Senator from District 10. I am writing to add my support to Rep. Dexter's Opioid Harm Reduction Policy Package.

This package attempts to tackle a very pervasive issue in our state. As others have mentioned, accidental deaths and hospitalizations because of opioid use has spiked since 2019 – increasing from around 280 in 2019 to 745 in 2021. Colleagues, we are failing our fellow Oregonians who are struggling with addiction and in the process, it is costing our state millions of dollars.

We are all aware that Measure 110, which was passed by the voters of Oregon in 2020, decriminalized the possession of small amounts of controlled substances, among other things. The first bill in this package, HB 2395, closes a gap that the measure missed – although Measure 110 decriminalized possession of controlled substances, it did not decriminalize paraphernalia which is associated with the use of opioids, including test strips and pipes which decrease the risk of overdose and death.

Other pieces in this package increase access to Naloxone (a safe intervention for reversing opioid overdoses) by allowing first responders to distribute opioid antagonist kits, allowing OHA to issue a standing order for obtaining such kits and more. The next section seeks to increase understanding and education around overdoses and opioid by increasing data and notifications when a youth dies due to an overdose. Finally, the last part is a group of technical fixes that include providing confidential treatment to minors for substance use and shielding school staff from liability should they administer naloxone to a student.

I want to thank Representative Dexter for her incredible work on these bills and for tackling an issue that is needlessly and tragically killing hundreds of Oregonians each year. While I respect the ballot measure process that brought us Measure 110 and support the goals of treatment rather than incarceration for addiction, we all know that the implementation of this measure has come with challenges. Although these bills are not necessarily set up as a fix to Measure 110, I believe that they will help to address its overall goals.

Colleagues, I urge your aye vote.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deb Patterson